(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Waiting list of telephone connections in Assam

422. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of consumers waiting for telephone connections under the Assam Telecom Circle;

(b) the reasons for non-fulfilment of demands of these consumers in the waiting list;

(c) how many WLLs are likely to be established within next three years and where would they be established; and

(d) whether it would be sufficient to cope with the waiting list problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The number of consumer waiting for telephone connection in Assam Telecom circle as on 30.06.2003 is 13817.

(b) The waiting list of 5970 in urban exchanges are pending due to non-availability of underground cable. The cable has been allotted and is in pipeline. Additional requirement of underground cable is planned to be allotted. The remaining waiting list is scattered in rural and farflung areas where provision of telephone connections on traditional wire line is economically not visible.

There was delay in introduction of Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) systems in Assam, as initially Government did not give permission due to security reasons. The WLL systems are now being deployed on priority in Assam after the grant of permission from Government.

(c) 22000 Lines of WLL system is targeted for Assam during 2003-04.35 New BTSs are planned to be installed at the stations furnished in Statement in addition to 26 existing BTSs *(See* below). For the year 2004-05 and 2005-06 the plans have not been finalised yet.

(d) Sufficient equipment has been allotted to clear the waiting list.

Statement

Name of Stations where BTs are planned for Installation in Assam Telecom Circle during 2003-04

Name of SSA	No. of BTS	BTS Site
Kamrup	4	Sonapur, Hajo, Rangia and Bijoynagar
Dibrugarti	7	Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Doomdooma, Moran Chapakhowa, Namrup and Margherita
Silchar	4	Hailakandi, Lalabazar, Dullaveherra and
Jorhat	6	Jorhat, Sibsagar, Mariani, Sonari, Bokakhat and Majuli
Bongaigaon	5	Tamulpur Barpeta Town, Abhayapuri, Pathsala and Lakhipur
Tezpur	7	Kharupetia, Bihupuria, Dhakuakhana, Jonai, Silapathar, Dhemaji and Tengla
Nagaon	2	Diphu & Hamren

Telephone facilities in the villages of Gujarat

423. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of villages in Gujarat are still without a telephone facility;

(b) if so, the details thereof, district-wise;

(c) whether Government have chalked out any plans to cover all the villages in the State with public telephones; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Vidya Vahini Project

424. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND,INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that "Vidya Vahini" a project to connect 60,000 Government and Government aided Senior Secondary Schools all over the country through the Internet, has been launched recently;